

TWO
SERMONS

Lately Preached at the

ASSIZES

IN

St. Maries Church

IN

LEICESTER.

The former *March* 23. 1670.

The latter *July* 27. 1671.

By *Robert Harrison* M. A. late Student of *Christ-Church*
Oxon. now Rector of *Wyfordby* in *Leicester-shire*.

*Micah 6. 8. He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth
the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk
humbly with thy God?*

LONDON Printed, and are to be sold by *George Sawbridge*,
Book-seller in *Melton-Mowbray, Leicester-shire*. 1672.

QVI

VIRO ORNATISSIMO

D. *Johanni Hartopp* BARONETTO,

Vice-Comiti pro Tempore

COMIT. *LEICESTR.*

Patrono suo multis nominibus Colendissimo

Hasce Conciones binas,

In quibus de Judicio & Justitia differitur.

Haud ita pridem

In Templo S. *MARIÆ Leicestriæ*

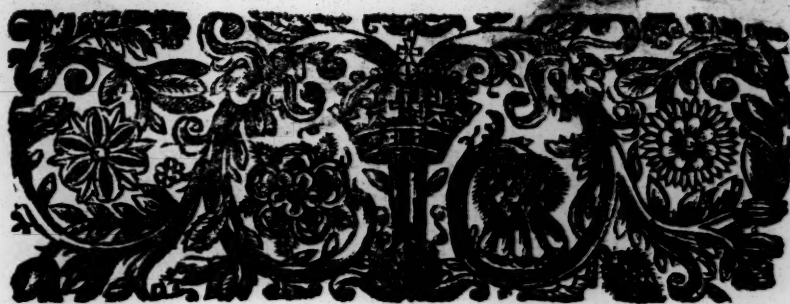
habitas,

Gratitudinis & Observantiæ

Ergo D. D. D.

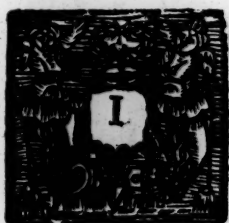
ROBERTUS HARRISON.





Amos 5. vers. 23, 24. *Take thou away from me the noise of thy Songs: for I will not hear the melody of thy Viols.*

But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.



IT is the unspeakable Folly of vain man, when he lyes under the pressures, or is within the sight of approaching Evils, when he's made sensible of the frowns of the Almighty, and comes to feel the effects of his displeasure upon him, for sin, to conceit that any thing which looks like Duty (though never so sleight and formal) will serve the turn, to smoothe Gods brow, to turn away his wrath, and to take the sinner into favour again.

As if the holy God (who is present every where, and knoweth all things) was either ignorant, or unmindfull of inward dispositions and affections, and had respect only to outward actions and deportments in Religious undertakings;

Men

1 Sam. 16. 7.

Job 35. 13.

Men indeed look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart: Surely (saith Elihu) God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.

To take the estimate of Divine mysteries, according to the shallow scantling of common sense and opinion, argues gross ignorance and blindness of mind, and is a sad indication of a carnal and unconverted estate.

Eccles. 5. 1.

Mal. 1. 8.

Thus many in a day of fears (as did the sinning *Israelites*) go on blindfold in Duty, resting in their outside performances, which are no better than *the Sacrifices of fools, the blind and the lame, and that which cost them nought.* Yet in these vain Oblations, they will securely confide, and now conclude themselves sufficiently guarded, against the loudest thunders of most terrible Communations.

But how highly the great God is displeased, with such empty, insignificant Services, we may clearly perceive from the Scripture now before us; where he abominates and rejects them, and severely prohibits the Formalists farther procedure and continuance in them: *Take thou away from me the noise of thy Songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy Viols, &c.*

Divis.

Which words contain a *Prohibition*, and a *Precept*: The *Prohibition* in the 23d. v. is tempered with *Indignation*; the *Precept* in the 24th. calls for *Reformation*: Or, in the Text (considered with its coherence) we have reported and reprov'd the great Corruptions and Disorders in Church and State. •

The

The *Church* was guilty of *will-worship* and *superstition*, the *State* of *Cruelty* and *Oppression*; both these must be *removed*, before God will be *intreated*.

Reformation is first to begin at the *Church*, but it is not to end there; the stream thereof must run thorow the *State* in like manner, that so it may refresh, and *make glad the whole City* Psal. 46. 4. of God.

The waters of the Sanctuary, which were first Ezek. 47. to the ankles, afterward increased to be up to the knees, and then to the loins, and at the last they became a great River, waters to swim in, a River that could not be passed over, which issued toward the East Country, and ran down into the Desert. Such should be the stream of Justice, it should run thorow the whole Country, that none may complain of the want of it; but that every one may have a free and easie access unto it; that so righteousness and judgment may be executed for all that are oppressed, Pl. 103. v. 6.

Thus you have the Division, I shall now proceed to the Exposition of the *Text*.

And first, briefly of the *Prohibition*, Take thou away from me the noise of thy Songs, &c.

These words admit of divers readings, which do nothing vary from the sense of our *English Version*; wherefore I need not run out time, to repeat them to you.

There's a *Meiosis* in this verse, *Minus dicitur, plus intelligitur*; for we are not only to understand the Lords dislike of their Ceremonies, and

Super-

Superstitious Services, (though that be sad enough, seeing it is his approbation and acceptance, that makes our performances of any worth or significancy) but also his exceeding hatred and abhorrence of them, as things which he could no longer endure, nor would he any more be burdened with them, and therefore he bids them take away these *provocations* from him, viz. *the noise of their Songs, and the melody of their Viols.*

Which expressions do figuratively include all the *Israelites* Festivals, Incense, Sacrifices, and external Services, spoken of in the foregoing verses, where the Lord by his Prophet declareth his *great displeasure* against them, and in this verse, his *utter rejection* of them.

Qu.

But it may be Quarry'd, Why would God cast off, and forbid the offering up of those Sacrifices, and the performance of that Service, which he himself had commanded?

Ans. I. Negatively.

I.

To this I answer, (1) Negatively.

God doth not here simply and absolutely reject the Sacrifices and Service of his *own institution*, but together with these, he requires a due administration of *Judgment* and *Justice*, and if either may be omitted and put off, he had rather it be *Sacrifice*, than *Judgment*, according to *Drusius* upon the place, who hath therefore rendred the following verse, *Potius volvatur ut aqua judicium, rather let Judgment roll down as water, (q. d.)* rather then with the neglect of *this*, you presume to draw nigh to God, though in the wayes of his own appointment: And in this sence is that
Scripture

(3)
Scripture to be understood, *Mat. 9. 13. I will have mercy and not Sacrifice ; (i. e.) mercy rather than Sacrifice.*

The Lord prefers justice, mercy, and peace, before Sacrifices; the *substance* of the *second*, before the *ceremonies* of the *first Table*; and is graciously pleased that his own immediate Service should stay for these, as you may read *Mat. 5. 23, 24. If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there rememberst that thy Brother hath ought against thee: Leave there thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

Nor 2^{dly}. were all those external Rites and Ceremonies observed by the *Israelites* (I mean the *ten Tribes*, whom our Prophet here all along chiefly reproves) complexly considered, of Gods Institution, and therefore the Lord calls them *their Songs*, and the melody of *their Viols*; they had foisted in many things of their own invention, and so became guilty of *will-worship*, yea, and of cursed *Idolatry*.

Neither lastly, did they frequent the *publique place*, viz. the Temple at *Jerusalem*, which the Lord had then chosen to himself, for an *house of Sacrifice*, partly to shadow forth the great mystery of their Salvation by Christ, and partly to preserve the whole body of the *Jews*, in unity of Faith and Religion, and that there might be no *rents* and *divisions* among them.

But they, like men, transgressed the Covenant, and Commandments of their God, and worshipped the *golden Calves*, which *Jeroboam* (that

Qui innocentiam colit, Domino supplicat; qui justitiam Deo libat; qui fraudibus abstinet, propitiatur Deum; qui hominem periculo surripit, optimam victimam cadit. Hac nostra sacrificia, hac Dei sacra sunt. Sic apud nos religiosior est ille qui justior.

Minucius Felix.

2.

3.

2 Chron. 7. 22.

Deut. 12. 13, 14.

Hos. 6. 7.

B

none-

none-such for impiety) had set up at Dan and Bethel: Thus did they provoke the Lord to anger with their High places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven Images. Now when God heard this, he was wrath, and greatly abhorred Israel.

2 Positively. But then Positively, their Sacrifices and Songs were rejected ;

I. *Impiorum sacrificia ingrata Deo, non quod simpliciter abominatus sit, sed ideo quod absque fide & penitentia ea offerrent ; deinde quod precium putarent esse pro peccato, &c. Lavat, in Prov. 15. 8. Mat. 1. 13.* First, Because they put so much confidence in them, as to think to set off with God, and to expiate for their sins, by their outward *Forms and Ceremonies*, though they neglected the *substantials and vitals* of Religion, the *Basise & Fouders*, the weightier matters of the Law, viz. Judgment, Mercy, and Faith.

Hence it was, that *their Oblations became vain, their Incense an abomination to the Lord, and their solemn meetings* (which they themselves were very highly conceited of) *he could not away with: Sordet in conspectu judicis, quod fulget in conspectu operantis ; That which was fair in their eyes, was filthy in the sight of God.*

2. 2dly. Because they were a wicked people, which even hated to be reformed ; and to such God saith, *what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my Covenant into thy mouth ? seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination ; how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind ? Prov. 21. 27.*

The sweetest melody hath but an harsh sound in the ears of God, when wicked men make it ; *Singing must be with grace in the heart : And, the*

Impiorum sacrificia ingrata Deo, non quod simpliciter abominatus sit, sed ideo quod absque fide & penitentia ea offerrent ; deinde quod precium putarent esse pro peccato, &c. Lavat, in Prov. 15. 8. Mat. 1. 13.

Psal. 56. 16.

Prov. 15. 8.

Eph. 5. 19.

the Sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Psal. 51. 17.

This for the Answer of the Quæry: The Note from the words take thus.

Meer outside, formal performances are so far from procuring the Lords acceptation, that they provoke him to indignation against all Hypocrites in Religion.

Doct.

To offer many Sacrifices with the Papists, without obedience, is no better in their own *Tostatus* phrase, than *studium nequitie*, a kind of devotion, by which a man takes much pains to offend his Maker. And however men cry up their own way, yet they will find, that want of a divine approbation will undo all. vid. Hof. 8. 13.

If we search the Scriptures, we shall find several *Instances*, which may sufficiently serve for the proof of this startling *Inference*; of so great an heap, I shall gather sparingly.

We read *Gen. 4. 4, 5.* how that God had respect to *Abels offering*, and not to *Cains*; the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives the reason hereof, *Heb. 11. 4. By faith Abel offered unto God a more acceptable Sacrifice, than Cain: Abel offered by faith, and Cain without faith, and therefore God accepted Abels Sacrifice, and rejected Cains.*

Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire, and by fire from heaven they were consumed, Levit. 10. 1. 2. Forasmuch as the Lord was not sanctified by them, in their approaches to him, therefore he would be sanctified upon them, in their destruction.

Mal. 1. 14. There's a curse upon the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing.

Mat. 23.

And how many dreadfull *woes*, no fewer then *seven*, in one Chapter, doth our blessed Saviour thunder out, against the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees, who did all their works, *Theatrico more*, that they might be seen of men, and have a *plaudite*.

Many more *proofs* might be added, but these may suffice: And if it was seasonable to enlarge here, I might give some Reasons of the Point, taken from the *greatness*, *holiness*, and *justice* of God, *who will not hold them guiltless, that take his name in vain*.

Applic.

Use 1.

For Reproof of
Papists.

But I cannot stay upon these; briefly to apply. *First*, This reproves our Adversaries the Papists, and overthrows their rotten *doctrine* of resting in *opere operato*, of ascribing merit to their *own works*, to their *Fastings*, *Prayers*, *Penance*, *Pilgrimages*, *Almsdeeds*, and the like; neither will their quaint distinctions of *first and second justification*, and of *works before and after conversion*, make a *sufficient prop*, to shore up their doctrine of *merit*, and to keep it from falling to the ground; forasmuch as the sacred Scriptures fully inform us, that *there is no other name or merit whereby we can be saved, then by Jesus Christ*.

Acts 4. 12.

ἡ γνῶσις πάντων
ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ
ἐν βασιλείᾳ.

Hence the great Apostle counted all things *loss and dung*, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, Phil. 3. 8.

When

When we have done all we can, we are to acknowledge our selves to be unprofitable Servants: *The bloud of Christ* (and that alone) is remedy for the killing of sin, so said Mr. Bradford, that holy man of God.

Christus est canonicalis gratia, & ab illo nobis omnes rivuli derivantur.
Daven.

And it was a pious expression of devout Bernard, *Lavat nos lachrymarum imber, magis autem lavat aqua illa preciosa, quæ de fonte pietatis (i. e.) latere Christi emanavit.*

We are not saved then, for our good works, and yet God will not save us without them; they are *via ad regnum, non causa regnandi*, as the same Father observes.

The Book of Homil. proves this at large, part 2.

Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost: which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Tit. 3. 5, 6.

This reproves all Formalists, and hypocritical Professors, who draw nigh to God with their mouth, and honour him with their lips, but their heart is far from him.

Use 2.
For Reproof of Formalists.
Mat. 15. 8.

Now the heart is that, which God chiefly requires, and looks for in duty, *Prov. 23. 26. My Son give me thine heart, (q. d.)* Let thy mind be wholly intent and applyed to me, renounce thy self, and set thy love only and wholly upon the Lord.

The heart of man is Gods best Temple, where he dwels with delight, if it be beautified and adorned with *humility, charity, and righteousness.*

It

*Quicquid cor
non facit, non
fit.*

Arnobius in his
Book against
the Gentiles,
asserteth, that
God is not tak-
en with such
toyces as Tem-
ples, Altars,
and Sacrifices,
but *cultus ve-
rus in pectore
est*, &c. An ho-
nest, sincere
heart is above
all the Sacri-
fices in the
world, p. 107.

*Use 3.
For Exhorta-
tion.*
Col. 3. 23; 24.

Bp. Reynolds
Serm. Beauty
and Bands.

It is the *heart* that makes every Religious per-
formance, *medullatum Sacrificium*, a *marrowy Sa-
crifice*, well-pleasing and acceptable unto the
Lord.

Among the Heathens, it was a Custom, when
the Beast was cut up for Sacrifice, the first thing
which the Priest look'd upon, was the *heart*, and
if the *heart* was naught, the Sacrifice was rejected;
So 'twill be here, in the worship of the true God,
Heart service is the best service.

Lastly, Let us all hence be exhorted, to be sin-
cere in the service of our God, to adorn our *Pro-
fession* by an Holy life, and a Gospel conversation;
and *whatsoever we do, let us do it heartily, as unto
God, and not unto men*; Knowing that of the Lord,
*we shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for we
serve the Lord Christ.*

Let us offer unto God, the pure Grapes of a
pruned Vine, loving him above all, and our Neigh-
bour, as our selves; for this is more then all whole
Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices.

I'll conclude this former part of my Text, in
the words of a Reverend and Learned Bishop:
*Christians must not suffer, either the meer form of
Godliness to swallow up the power, or the pretence of
power to shut out the form; but we must give the
Lord, both that inward and outward honour, which
is due unto his Holy name, in all our solemn atten-
dances upon him.*

Now to pass from the *Inhibition* of sin committed,
to the *Injunction* of duty omitted: And the good
Lord help us all, to leave off the *pursuit* of sin,
and

and to fall upon the practice of duty, of the great duty in my Text, that *Magistrates* especially (who are chiefly concerned in it) may endeavour earnestly, to let judgment roul down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

In which Precept, there are two things considerable; as

First, An *Antithesis*, the adversative particle *but*, intimates an opposition to their Musical Instruments and Songs, which, though parts of Gods Service, are rejected, in the precedent verse, because they were defiled with hypocrisie and impiety.

1.
An Antithesis.

The *ten Tribes* put much stress, upon Intervals, Circumstantial, and Ceremonials: Now in this verse, they are minded of the great and weighty matters of the Law, viz. judgment and righteousness, which they are also commanded to execute and perform.

2dly. Here's *Locus a comparatis*; wherein judgment, and running waters, righteousness, and mighty streams are compared together. Judgment and righteousness imply righteous judgment, or an administration of judgment righteously, in a plentiful, firm, and invariable manner, for it is to roul down as waters, and as a mighty stream.

2.
Locus à comparatis.

Which Scripture, some Interpreters of good note (as *Lyra*, *A Lapide*, and *Tremelius*) understand of a torrent of Judgments, threatned in righteousness, against *Israel*, for their crying sins, whereby they should be carried away into Captivity,

vity, as things are violently carried down, by a strong and rapid stream.

I shall leave these learned Authors to abound in their own sence, and take *the words* as they are commonly received, by Expositors of great esteem also, and more in number, then the former; these are *Vatablus, Castalio, Livelius, Gualter, Drusius, Grotius, Piscator, and Calvin*: All which Authors, besides several others, as the *Dutch Annotations, Diodat, Mayer, and Hutcheson*, (it would be too tedious to cite them, in their own words) understand this Command, according to the sence already hinted at, *viz.* of a diligent, impartial execution of judgment, and an abounding in the fruits thereof; that there be no unjust dealings among men, but that all unrighteousness be born down, and quite taken away, as *hay, or stubble, by swift running waters.*

The words thus opened, resolve themselves into this *practical Observation*: *viz.*

Dpct.

A vigorous and constant administration of true and righteous judgment, is a duty of grand concernment, to a people professing Religion.

Mr. Baxter
Cure of
Church-Divi-
sions.

Judgment (as a learned Author hath well distinguished in a Book lately set forth) is *private* or *publique*; the *Judicium privatum discretionis*, which is the guide of rational acts, belongeth to every private man; the *Judicium publicum* is either *in foro Civili*, determining in order to corporal co-action, and this belongeth only to the Magistrate; or it is *in foro Ecclesie*, in order to Church Communion, or Excommunication: Thus far he.

Now,

Now, it is the *Judicium publicum in foro Civili*, that I am to discourse of, at this time; and this (as you have heard) is principally incumbent on Magistrates, who are not to *bear the sword in vain*, out of formality, or for fashion sake, but *for the terror of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well*; for the keeping of the Laws of God and the Land, and for the protection of the innocent; *that they may sit every man under his own Vine, and Figg-tree, and none may make them afraid, according to that promise, Micah 4. 4.*

The stream of Justice (I say) must flow from the *lawfull Magistrates*, and be derived from them to the people, as the *precious oyntment, that was poured on Aarons head, trickled down to the skirts of his garments.*

Holy Writ abounds in proof of the *Observation*, so that 'tis not only the Doctrine of my Text, but of many other Scriptures also.

I shall be your Remembrancer of some few of them, as of that parallel place, *Isa. 1. v. 16, 17, 18. wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, from before mine eyes, cease to do evil: Learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.*

The same injunction you have in *Psal. 82. v. 3, 4. How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked? Defend the poor and fatherless, do justice to the afflicted and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.*

Be pleased also to consider that Scripture, *Zech. 8. v. 16, 17. These are the things that ye*
C
shall

shall do, speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour, execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates : And let none of you imagine evil in your heart against his neighbour, and love no false Oath, for all these are the things that I hate, saith the Lord.

And in the 6th. of Micah v. 8. He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God ?

All these places are so many clear proofs of this great truth, viz. that the Lord requireth, especially of men professing piety, that they should make conscience of justice and equity, in their mutual dealings one with another ; that so they may prove the sincerity of their Profession, and may adorn it by an answerable conversation, that their whole life may be (as one phraseth it) *Index & Commentarius Evangelii ; an Index and Commentary of the Bible.*

Method pro-
pounded.

In the farther prosecution of this Observation, I shall endeavour three things.

1. The Explication.
2. The Confirmation : and
3. The Application of it.

1. For Expli-
cation.

In the Explication I shall pursue the Metaphor, in these following singularities ; The rowling down of judgment as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream, implies

I.
Copiousness of
judgment.

First, Copiousness of judgment, an abounding in acts of justice : Thus according to *Vatablus*, Sit multa

multa justitia; and Grotius, Jus apud te ut aqua profuat, & benignitas, ut torrens rapidus.

In broad running Rivers, waters are very plentiful; thus Justice must be administered, not by halves, in a drizzling scantling manner, *here a little and there a little*; but plentifully, yea, abundantly, that so it may reach all, high and low, rich and poor, just and unjust, (as God makes the rain to descend upon both) that the one may be rewarded, and the other punished; for herein consists true judgment and justice, according to Solon, who said, *A State was held together by two things, viz. Reward and Punishment.*

Postulat Deus, non ut justitia colatur simpliciter, sed ut passim abundet, & ubique vigeat in summa copia & affluentia, vid. Druf. in loc. Mat. 5. 45.

In 2 Sam. 8. v. 15. we read, that King David executed judgment and justice to all the people. Let these fountains (then) be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets, Prov. 5. 16.

2. A speedy execution of Judgment; a mighty stream runs swiftly, so Justice must be done without delays, that men may not be wearied and quite tired out, in tracing the Climax of your Court accesses.

2.
Speedy execution of judgment.

There are some that turn judgment into *wormwood*, and others that turn it into *Vinegar*; *Injustice makes it bitter, and delays make it sour.*

Protracting of justice, doth very much take off the edge of justice: It is storied of Sertorius the Roman, that he fed his Creditors and Clients, with fair words, but did nothing for them: It would be much better with many, then now it is, if there were none among us, that followed the practice of this man.

Justice must be executed *speedily*, (that's the *second thing*) yet not *rashly*, without mature deliberation, till there be a right and full understanding of the Cause : Job *searcht out the cause which he knew not*, c. 29. v. 16.

Qui statuit aliquid, parte inaudita altera, æquum licet statuerit, haud æquus est Jdex.

Donc adveniente proximo, equus per vestiget illum Jdex.
Jun. in loc.

Judges had need keep one ear stopt and unprejudiced for the *Defendant* ; their Commission is of *Oyer and Terminer*, they must first *hear*, and then *determine*.

He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, (saith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. v. 17.) *but his neighbour cometh after him and searcheth him* ; or, until his neighbour come after him, and the *Judge searcheth him*, (as *Junius* hath rendred the words.)

Judg. 19. 30.

Both sides should be heard indifferently ; patience and gravity in hearing, is an essential part of justice, very much becoming the Ministers thereof, who should *do*, as the Levite said, *Consider, take advice, and then speak their minds*.

3.
A pure administration of Justice.

3. The Metaphor implys a *pure administration of Justice* : Running waters are *clear and pure*, not like puddles or *standing Ponds*, that keep all manner of garbidge and filth, and whatever trash is cast into them.

The stream of *righteousness* must not incorporate, nor be mixed with the mud of *injustice*, for that will hinder the *current* from sliding through the channels of Judicature, so purely and speedily, as the Judge of all the world commandeth and expecteth.

Our *English Chronicles* report the horrid wickedness of the *Jews*, in poisoning Springs and Fountains in this Land, for which they were deservedly

(17)
servedly banished: It would be a great blessing to the Nation, if all self-ended, malicious, mercenary perverters of Justice, might follow these Jews, and that there was an *Ostracism* upon those, that cast filth into the fountains of Judgment, whereby the waters thereof become *mischievous*, and not *medicinal*.

4. *A willing and ready proceeding in acts of Justice*, without extraordinary importunity, or artificial helps and provocations: A chearfull and free spirit in duty, is that which is most accepted in duty; the Lord observes not so much *what*, as from *what affection* a thing is done.

4.
A willing and ready proceeding in acts of Justice.

The Scriptures call him an unjust Judge, that avenged the Widow of her Adversary, meerly to free himself of the trouble of her frequent complaints.

Mighty streams run down *readily*, so justice must be executed (not with a great deal of difficulty, and labour, like waters fetcht out of a pump, there must be no need of *pumping*, or *forcing* it forth, but) *willingly and with a ready mind*.

It was a seasonable word, spoken by the *Old woman*, when complaining to the Emperor *Adrian* of some wrong she had sustained, he told her, he was not at leisure to hear her suit; whereupon she presently reply'd, *That then he ought not to be at leisure to be Emperor*: which smart expression came so close unto him, that ever after, he was more facile and forward to entertain Suitors.

5. *A regular execution of Judgment*; mighty streams usually have a straight and even current; the

5.
A regular execution of Justice.

the Channels, wherein they run, are not so intricate and crooked, have not so many mæanders, windings and turnings, as your little narrow *brooks* have, for then they would loose much of their strength and force: So in acts of Justice, there must be a *straight and regular* proceeding, a proceeding *by rule*, according to the *Law of God, and the established Laws of the Land*.

Thus Queen *Vasthi* was to be punished for her disobedience according to *Law*, *Esth. 1. 15. what shall we do unto the Queen Vasthi according to Law, because she hath not performed the Commandment of the King?*

Lex est norma officii & judicii, from which Judges are, *ne latum unguem discedere*, not to swerve the breadth of a finger nail, out of any squint-ey'd respects, or sinister ends and aims; they should alwayes have regard to their *Rule*, and remember it is their Office, *jus dicere*, and not *jus dare*, to interpret the *Laws* already constituted, and not to make, or give *new Laws*: for this would be like the Authority of the Church of *Rome*, which under pretext of expounding the holy Scriptures, doth not stick to adde and alter where and what they please, pronouncing what they do not find, and by shew of *antiquity*, produce *novelty*.

The ministers of Justice ought to abhor such prevarications; *one foul sentence from them*, doth more hurt, *than many filthy sins from others*, for these do but corrupt the *streams*, the other corrupts the *fountain*.

Ill fares that
State which
harbours such
a man,
As can what-
e'er he will, and
will whate'er he
can.

6. It implies *Magnanimity, Zeal, and Resoluion* 6.
 in the exercise of *Judgement and Justice*; for *Justice requires*
Righteousness is to run down as a mighty stream, that *Magnanimity.*
 bears down all opposition, and whatsoever stands in
 its way. Thus Judges are to be men of *truth* and
courage, fearing God, and hating covetousness, ac-
 cording to that *mark*, *Jethro* gave of the *Officers*,
 which he would have *Moses* set over the people,
Exod. 18. 21.

And it was *Jehosaphats* Counsel to his Judges,
2 Chron. 19. 6, 7, 11. Take heed what ye do, for ye
 judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you
 in the judgment: wherefore now let the fear of the
 Lord be upon you, take heed and do it, for there is no
 iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of per-
 sons, nor taking of gifts. Deal courageously, and the
 Lord shall be with the good.

Of this brave Heroick Spirit, was *John Duke* of
Saxony, who stoutly defended the sincere Prote-
 stant Religion, against the Pope and all his Adhe-
 rents, in three publique Imperial Assemblies; and
 when it was told him, that he should lose the favor
 of the Pope and of the Emperor, if he stuck so fast
 to the *Lutheran Cause*: His answer was, *Here are*
two wayes, I must either serve God, or the World;
and which of these do ye think is the better? and so
he put them off with this pleasant indignation.

7. The Metaphor imports an *impartial admini-* 7.
stration of justice. Heavy things are carried down, *An Impartial*
 by rousing waters, as well as lighter; great logs *administration*
 and trees, as well as small chips may swim down a *of Justice.*
 mighty stream.

A Judge should be *Equanimous*, as well as *Magnanimous*. There must be no respect of persons had in judgment, *Lev. 19. v. 15. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgement, thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty, but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy Neighbour.*

At que contra
R. upub. neq;
contra jusju-
rindum, ac fi-
dem, amici cau-
si vir bonus
faciet, ne si ju-
dex quidem erit
de ipso amico.
Ponit enim
personam ami-
ci, cum induit
judicis. Cic.
Off. lib. 3.
Vid. Speeds
Chron.

He that justifieth the wicked, and that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord, Prov. 17. 15.

Exuit personam Judicis, qui amici vel hostis induit. Though *Plato* might be a *Friend*, and *Socrates* a *Friend*, yet *Truth* is the greatest *Friend*. *Qui pro Veritate est, pro Rege est.*

Henry the fourth, King of England, when his eldest Son, the Prince of *Wales*, was by the Lord Chief Justice committed to Prison, for affronting him on the *Bench*, gave God thanks, for that he had a Judge so impartial in executing justice, and a Son so obedient as to submit to such a punishment.

It was also, a brave Princely saying of *Rodolphus* the Emperor, when he understood that some of his Courtiers hindred poor men from applying themselves unto him for justice: *Sinite homines ad me venire, non enim ideo Imperator sum, ut in arcula includar.*

P. 1 y.

And of *Trajan* it is reported, that he neither feared, nor hated any man, but heard, examined and judged the Causes of his Subjects, without prejudice, patiently and impartially. These are noble and fit patterns for the imitation of Judges, who ought

ought not to regard the *Man*, so much as the *Matter*; who should hear *Cauſes* ſpeak, and not *Perſons*, and judge according to truth and equity, and not according to opinion nor appearance, for fear or favour.

Laſtly, *Conſtancy and Perſeverance* are required in the performance of righteous judgment, which muſt not be like a *Land-flood*, that continueth for a ſhort ſeaſon, and then drieth up, becauſe it had nothing to feed and maintain it; but like *Running-waters*, which flow from a ſpringing Fountain, and ſo never decay, nor fall lower. *Pſal. 106. v. 3. Bleſſed are they, that keep judgment, and he that doth righteouſneſs at all times.* *Lewis*, King of France, having granted a Pardon to a Murderer, at the requeſt of one of his Courtiers, upon the reading of *this Text*, preſently withdrew it, and ſaid, *he would give no Pardon where the Law did not Pardon*; he alſo farther added, *it was a work of mercy and charity, to puniſh an Offender; and not to puniſh Crimes, was as great an evil as to commit them.*

8.

Conſtancy is required in the execution of juſtice.

There is a *Paſſive Injuſtice*, and Magiſtrates may be unjuſt in neglecting, as well as in perverting judgment. *Auſonius* ſaith of the Emperour *Claudius*; *Non faciendo nocens, ſed patiando fuit*; *Not to do juſtice, is injuſtice. Sontibus nimis ignoſcendo, inſontibus ſit injuria.*

Thus you have the Metaphor unveyled, and the fence thereof preſented to you in thoſe eight *Singularities*. Now to the *Magiſtrate*, that ſincerely endeavours, to act according to theſe diſco-

D

veries,

veries, that shall make it his *τὸ ἔργον*, his *Sparta*, his great business, to administer judgment plentifully, speedily, purely, willingly, regularly, impartially, and constantly; to this brave man it may be said, as Samuel did to Saul, when he first anointed him King, *Do as occasion shall serve thee, for God is with thee.*

1 Sam. 10. 7.

I have done with the *Explication* of the *Point*; the next thing to be handled is the *Confirmation* of it, and for this there may be given several *Reasons*.

Reas. 1.
It is the command of God to execute judgment.

Divino intuitu praecepto obediendum est, non disputandum.

Reas. 2.
This duty is commanded.

Pl. 106. 30, 31.

The first is couched in my Text; *It is the Command of God*, that judgement should be executed *in truth and in righteousness*: Now were there no other Reason but this, it would be abundantly sufficient of it self to confirm the Doctrine, for we are not to *dispute*, but to *obey* the *Commandments* of the Lord, which are *holy, just and good*, the reason of all reason, and not only *right* in themselves, but the *rule* of reasonable actions unto his creatures.

2. As this duty in *Theſi* hath the stamp of a great *Command*, so in *Hypothesi* the grant of a gracious acceptance; It is both *commanded* and *commended* of God. *Phineas executed judgment, and it was counted unto him for righteousness, unto all Generations for evermore.* (q. d.) The Lord highly approved of this fact of his, as just and righteous, and assigned to him, and his posterity, for their *Reward*, the *Priesthood* for ever, *because he was zealous for his God*, *Numb. 25. 23.*

3. This

3. This is a special remedy for the removal of the Judgments of God: The Plague was stayed, when Phineas had slain Zimri and Cozbi; and after Achan was stoned to death, Israel prevailed against their Enemies: So when justice was done upon Sauls Sons, for their bloody cruelty against the Gibeonites, the three years Famine ceased, 2 Sam. 21. 14.

4. Hereby Blessings are procured and continued to posterity; Jer. 22. 15, 16. Did not thy Father eat and drink, and do judgement and justice, and then it was well with him.

It was King Davids exhortation to the people of Israel, Keep, and seek for all the Commandments of the Lord your God, that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance, for your Children after you for ever.

Now if Magistrates will not for Conscience sake, 'twere well if they would for Posterity sake, act justly, and as they ought to do.

5. The neglect and non performance of this duty, is a mighty provocation to God, and will certainly bring down some judgments upon an unrighteous Nation, Jer. 21. 12. O house of David, thus saith the Lord, execute judgment in the morning, and deliver him that is spoiled, out of the hand of the Oppressor, lest my fury go out like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

Lastly, without a due and diligent execution of justice, there can be no safe and quiet living in the world; Self-preservation therefore calls for this.

Reas. 3.
To do justice is
a means to re-
move judge-
ments.

Reas. 4.
Blessings are
procured to po-
sterity.

1 Chr. 28. 3:

Reas. 5.
The neglect of
justice is a
great provoca-
tion to God.

Vid. Jer. 22.
3, 4, 5.
Zech 7. 9, &c.

Reas. 6.
Without the ex-
ecution of ju-
stice, there can
be no safety in
the world.]

Lex est hominibus, quod aqua piscibus; extra aquam non vivunt pisces, nec extra legem homines, as a learned Author hath well observed.

Drufius.

*Nec praecepta
patrum, nec
Christi dogma-
ta curant.*

*Faciunt se
dominos ve-
rum, & sibi
cuncta licere.*

*Cui vis est,
non metuit, jus
obruitur vi.*

*Quicquid jure
possidetur, in-
juria aufer-
tur. Quicquid*

*Nulla tam in-
festa homini-
bus bestia, ut
sunt sibi fera-
les plerique
Christiani.*

What would become of our Liberties, Properties, and Priviledges, (which are sacred and precious things) if the *current of Justice* should be stopped, and there be no *Reprover* in the gate.

All distinction of places and orders of men upon Earth, would be quickly taken away, and there would be nothing but raging discord, and horrible confusion in the world ; mans power would degenerate into tyranny, wisdom into craft, and justice into cruelty : No person should longer possess that which is *his*, then he hath more then ordinary *might and power*, to maintain his *right* ; or *policy*, to keep himself out of the *reach* of every injurious *claw*. The poor mans *little Pasture*, would presently be impal'd in my Lords *large Park*, because it lyes convenient for his Honour, as *Naboths Vineyard* did for King *Ahab*.

Men would be like devouring Fish in a Pond, or ravenous Beasts in a Wilderness ; the great ones would eat up the little ones, and the strong would prey upon the weak : they would become Lions, for rage, cruelty and oppression, Foxes for subtilty in evil, Swine for filthiness and uncleanness, Dogs for envy and malice, Wolves for rapine, yea as the wild Asses Colt for folly and stupidity : It would neither be incivility nor calumny, to describe men by such compellations, were there no *Law* to restrain their exorbitancies, and to correct their manners.

You

You have heard the *Confirmation* of the Doctrine with Reasons, be pleased to put them together: *The great God commands the execution of Judgment; he commends it also: It is a remedy to remove curses, a means to procure blessings for us and our Children after us; the neglect of it is a mighty provocation to the Lord; and without it, there can be no peaceable living in the world.* And now consider, whether a vigorous and constant execution of righteous judgment, be not a duty of grand concernment, to a people professing Religion.

I am now to *Apply*, and the Uses of our Observation are only two, which I shall briefly dispatch.

Applic.

First, This should stir up the people of England unto *unfeigned thankfulness* to Almighty God, for the good and wholesome *Laws* we enjoy, and for those Magistrates, that are diligent and faithfull in the execution of them.

*Use 1.
Of Thank-
fulness.*

It is a mercy to have Judges, *modo audeant, quæ sentiunt*, (as the Orator hath it:) So that they have courage and integrity to do, what they think fit and equal to be done, who will not be swayed by the *gifts*, nor scared by the *greatness* of men, to pass an unrighteous sentence: Let us praise God for such.

Cic. pro Milone.

The next Use is of Exhortation, and here I shall endeavour in a few words, to divide to every one his portion, and to press home the *Duty* of my Text, to persons especially concerned in it.

*Use 2.
Of Exhorta-
tion.*

And in the first place, I beseech you, *My Lord*, the venerable Judge of this Circuit, to suffer the word

*I.
To the Judge.*

word of Exhortation ; I would not forget to whom I speak, yet I must remember from whom I speak.

I have a message from the Great God, the Judge of all the World, unto *you* this day, and it is to mind you of your *Duty*, that you *do Justice*, and *execute right*, without respect of persons, that you quit not the Guilty, nor condemn the Innocent ; *But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.*

In this River, there must be no ebbing nor flowing, the banks at all times are to be full, and the current mighty, neither must the stream be stopped, or turned another way ; for then iniquity will take place, and whosoever drinks of this puddle, Numb. 5. 18. it will be like the *water of jealonsie* to him, *bitter water, that causeth the curse.*

I beseech you, *My Lord*, follow your pattern, Job 29. 14. *I put on righteousness, and it cloathed me, my judgment was as a robe and a diadem : They who wear justice for a cloak, need no cloak for injustice : Justice is both a Cloak, and an Helmet, it will adorn you, it will secure you.*

God forbid, that any should find you like the brooks of *Temar*, that when they come for the waters of judgment, they should find the brooks dry.

There is abundance of filth in this Nation, for iniquity abounds every where ; and certainly there can be no better expedient used, for the cleansing out these increased *dunghills* of impiety, then by letting forth the *river of justice*

to run down upon them, as *Hercules* cleansed the *Augean* Stable, by letting the River *Alpheus* into it.

2. My next errand is to you, the honourable and worshipfull *Justices* of this County; I beseech you, give no just cause of complaining in our streets, through your neglect of Justice: Take heed of being *tainted* with those sins, which you are to punish in others; if the Justice be a person of a lewd life himself, it cannot be expected, that he should use any just severity, against those who are *fly-blown* with the like transgressions. Allow not of sin in your selves, nor in your Servants, nor in any others; but frown upon it, wherever you meet with it: a frown of yours may do more service to God, then many Sermons of ours.

2.
To the *Justices*.
Ecce quid valeant statuta legum, ecce quid proficit definitio sanctionum, quae illi spernunt maxime, qui ministrant.
Salv.

3. I am to exhort you, the *learned Lawyers*, to put forth your utmost endeavours, for the strengthening of the stream of justice, by an honest and quick dispatch of your *Clients Causes*, and not to weaken it, by unnecessary delays, and injurious defalcations: Be faithfull to your Engagements, and do not seek to make a *prey* of those, that seek to you for *relief*: This would be *Savage* cruelty indeed, even like to that of the *wolf*, which undertook to cure the *sheep* of his *cough*, but 'twas by sucking out his blood: The remedy proved worse than the disease.

3.
To the *Lawyers*.

4. Let me exhort you, who are to be of the Grand Inquest, to do your duty, in making *faithfull Presentments*, according to your Oath: Take notice of the reigning sins of your Country, and do

4.
To the Grand Inquest.

do not conceal any of them, as *Rachel* did her Fathers Images, by sitting upon them : Spare neither great nor small, rich nor poor, but do you sincerely endeavour also, *That judgment may run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.*

5.

To all in General.
Cajetan.

Lastly, To put a period to my discourse ; of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum, *Ut ex parte sua agat unusquisque, quod suum est* ; that every one should perform the duty belonging to him ; that Magistrates rule justly, and according to Law ; that Ministers preach faithfully, according to the Scriptures ; that the people live *peaceable and quiet lives, in all godliness and honesty* ; that all of us endeavour the good and welfare of the Nation, and none among us, be as a *wen*, or *wolf*, drawing away nourishment from the body, without doing it any service.

1 Tim. 2. 2.

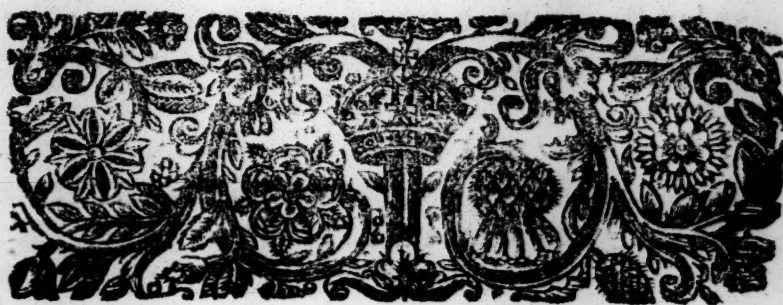
Phil. 4. 8. 9.

Finally Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things, and the God of peace shall be with you.

Heb. 13. 20, 21

Which God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant ; make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

F I N I S.



Prov. 14. ver. 34. *Righteousness exalteth a Nation : but Sin is a reproach to any people.*



I N a late discourse, upon the like occasion, I endeavoured, from another *Text*, to set forth the great duty of a pure and powerful administration of *Righteous Judgment*, which is to *run down as waters, and as a mighty stream, Amos 5. 24.*

I shall now *begin*, where I formerly *ended*, and advance (through divine assistance) more vigorously to inculcate and press home the very *same duty*, from these words of wise *Solomon*, which may be considered as a twofold Argument, taken from *Reward and Punishment* (those great Incentives to duty) exciting us thereunto.

From the due *praise* of righteousness, and the manifest *peril* of sin, we shall find sufficient cause, to be enamoured with the *one*, and to detest the *other*, to *abhor that which is evil, and to cleave to that which is good.* Rom. 12. 9.

E

What

Gen. 25. 23.

What the Lord himself said to *Rebecca* when *Twins* lay struggling in her, the same may be spoken of this Scripture; *Two Nations are in its Womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from its bowels*; But it must not be so with these, as it was with *Jacob* and *Esau*, for the *Elder* is here the beloved, and the *Younger* is hated of God.

II. 3. 10, 11.

Righteous ones are acceptable and pleasing in his sight, and they shall be rewarded; Sinners are an abomination to him, and they shall not be unpunished. *Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings: Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.*

So then, not to multiply particulars (because I would not fall into either of those *Extreams*, of being too nice and curious, or too negligent and careless in the division of my Text; for as *Seneca* saith, *Idem vitii habet nimia, quod nulla divisio*) you have here

1. *The blessed fruit of Righteousness; and*
2. *The cursed product of Sin.*

Righteousness exalteth a Nation, but Sin is a reproach to any people.

I shall speak to the *parts*, as they lie before us, after a brief explication of the termes.

And first to give you a *taste* of the fruit of Righteousness, it will be expedient to enquire into two things, as

1. *What is that Righteousness which exalteth a Nation?*
2. *What is meant by the exaltation of a Nation?*

These

Method propounded.

These two *Queries* being resolved, I shall undertake the farther Illustration of the Assertion.

First then, *What is that Righteousness that exalteth a Nation?* Qu. 1.

In answer thereunto, we must distinguish of the word *Righteousness*; There is a twofold Righteousness, *viç.* of *Imputation*, and of *Implantation*. Answ.

The Righteousness of Imputation is wrought by the *merit* of Christ *for us*; the Righteousness of Implantation, is wrought by the *Spirit* of Christ *in us*; the one is the Righteousness of our *justification*, the other is the Righteousness of our *sanctification*: Now 'tis the latter of *these*, which is here said *to exalt a Nation*; and *Cajetan* phraseth it an *Universal Righteousness*, which is Influential into all the actions of a Christian, and streams through the whole course of his life; it is so very conspicuous, and casts such a shine upon it, as evidenceth him that hath it to be holy, *ἐν πάντῃ ἀναστροφῇ* in all manner of conversation, as in 1 Pet. *Justitiam hie tum generalem accipe pro qualibet virtute, tum specialem, quæ est virtus cuiq; jus suum tribuens. &c. Vide Corn. a Lapide in loc.*

I. 15.

Righteousness is a word of great latitude; *Justitia latissime patet ac omnes complectitur virtutes*, saith *Ludovicus Vives* in his *Commentary upon Austin de Civ. Dei*. It includes not only all moral virtues, but also all Divine and Spiritual Graces. *Vid. l. 12. c. 4. Justitia inulo reliquæ virtutes omnes complectuntur.*

Aristotle calls it *omnis virtus*, and saith it excels all other, *quantum Lucifer inter astra*, as the bright and Morning-Star excels the rest in beauty and splendor.

*Tam ad deum
quam ad homi-
nes extenditur.*

*Iustitia est
virtus qua su-
um cuique tri-
buit; Deo qua
sunt Dei, & ho-
minibus, qua
sunt hominum.*

*Quid Deo de-
bemus? fidem,
timorem, dilec-
tionem. Eli. vid.
Lavet. in loc.*

*Pietas & equi-
tas, quasi vena
sunt iustitiae,
his enim duobus
fontibus con-
stat tota iusti-
tia. Lactan. l. 5.*

Mr. Gurnall.

*Sensus quidem
universalis est,
&c. vid. Jamle-
num, & Sala-
zar, in loc.*

*Vid. Pezelum
in Gen. 18. 38.*

It is a virtue in a stricter sense, that doth *Suum cuique tribuere*, that renders to every one his due; to God, the things that are Gods, as Faith, Fear, Love, Thanksgiving and Obedience; and to men, the things that are mens, as Honour, Tribute and Subjection to Kings; Reverence, Respect and Service to Superiors; Love, Kindness and Justice to Inferiors; Truth and Equity in our mutual dealings and negotiations in the world, a doing to others, as we our selves would be done by, according to that sacred and standing Rule of our blessed Lord and Master, *Mat. 7. 12.*

This Righteousness is to be found in the several Walks of Gods Commandments, it runs (as one faith) through every Precept, as it were the veins of every Law, in the second Table, and calls for obedience due to parents, Natural, Ecclesiastical and Civil in the *fifth Command*; our care to preserve our Neighbours life in the *sixth*, Chastity in the *seventh*, Estate in the *eighth*, good name in the *ninth*, our desires in their due bounds, against coveting what is our neighbours in the *tenth*.

And take but the word in the most comprehensive sense, and it is the obedience of the whole Law.

This is the Righteousness that exalteth a Nation, not as a Cause producing an effect, but as a means, conducing to such an end. The Lord doth not thus reward our Righteousness, *ex debito*, but *ex bene placito*; not for our merits (that plea will fail us) but for his mercies sake.

This

This for the Answer of the first Quæry

Secondly, What is meant by the *exaltation of a Nation*, when may a Nation be said to be exalted? Qu. 2.

Then is a Nation, any Nation exalted, as well as the *Jewish* (whose Doctors would have this former part of the Text, speak them the only happy people in the world, excluding all others) when it is blessed, made prosperous and flourishing, in the enjoyment of *Truth, Peace and Plenty*; *When the Almighty* (for it is his doing) *enlargeth the borders of it, strengtheneth the bars of her gates, and blesteth her Children within her; When he maketh peace in her borders, abundantly blesteth her provision and satisfieth her poor with bread: When there is no breaking in nor going out, no leading into captivity, nor complaining in the Streets.* Answ.

And when the Lord, with an higher hand yet blesteth a people with all spiritual and heavenly blessings; when he placeth his Sanctuary in the midst of a Nation, his Tabernacle is with a people, and he sets up among them the glorious light of the Gospel in the golden Candle stick of his Ordinances: *When he turns to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent* (or with one shoulder) as it is in that Gospel-promise, *Zech. 3. 9.* Then may it be rightly said of such a Nation or People, according to the Psalmists conclusion, *Psal. 144. 15. Happy is the People that is in such a case, yea happy is that People, whose God is the Lord. Glorious things are spoken of thee O City of God.*

Acts 10. 35.

*Exod 34. 24.
Pl. 146. 13, 14.
132. 15.
134 13 14.*

*Iustitia exal-
tat Reges &
Populos, tum
opibus, celebri-
tate & gloria,
tum dilatando
eorum regna,
finis & termi-
nos, tum per
omnia eos se-
cundando, tum
deniq; ornan-
do eos omni vir-
tute & gratia
in hac vita, ac
gloria in futu-
ra, qui est finis
omnis reipub.
nimirum ut
populos per vir-
tutem dirigat
ad felicitatem
& gloriam cœ-
lestem. vid. a
Lapid. in loc.
Psal. 87. v. 3.*

Now

(Exaltat) est
Metaphora à
rebus corporeis,
qua graves
pondere. vi ta-
men & viribus
adjunctis, in
altum attol-
luntur; sic
gens sua natu-
ra ignominia
deprimi nata,
justitie tamen
administratio-
ne & exercitio
honorata, &
valuti supremo
in loco collocata
videtur. Cart-
wright in loc.

Now is a *Nation* exalted, made honourable and renowned, or *born on high* (as judicious Cartwright understands the expression) which he judgeth to be a metaphor, taken from heavy bodies, lifted up and carried aloft, by joint force and united strength: Thus a people brought low, made vile and miserable, because of their sins, by the administration of justice, and the exercise of righteousness, are lifted up on high, made honourable and happy.

This, this is the way and means to make that people the *Head*, which were formerly the *Tail*, to make them stronger than their enemies, and more excellent than their neighbours. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee, therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life, saith the merciful God, to a repentant, reforming people, Isa. 43. 4. And Ezek. 16. 14. Thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God.

Thus you see, what is that righteousness that exalteth a nation, and what is meant by the exaltation of a nation. I am now to confirm the Assertion, which indeed stands not in so much need of proving, as of improving, however I shall omit neither.

Eatenus felix
ac fortunata
est Civitas,
quatenus Cives
suos à terrena
Civitate in cœ-
lestem trans-
ferre suis legi-
bus studet.
Salazar. in loc.

Righteousness exalteth a Nation, or a Nation is greatly blessed by the means and for the sakes of *Righteous ones*, who diligently perform the duties of their places, to the glory of God, and in the right of those with whom they have to do.

Righte-

Righteousness is not to be taken *here*, only in the *abstract*, but with relation to the *subject* in which it is inherent; the *concrete* is included in the *abstract*, as it is often to be found in holy Writ, where the names of Virtues and Vices, are put for the persons to which they are adjoyned, as *wickedness* for *the wicked*, Job 5. 16. St. Paul was called *ποικίλος*, a *Pest*, for a pestilent plaguy fellow; thus *pride* is put for the *proud*, Jer. 50. 31. Behold I am *against thee*, O thou most proud, or O pride, as it is in the margent of your Bibles, which is to be understood of the lofty and proud City of Babylon: So here, *Righteousness* being inclusive of *Righteous ones*, the Inference is clear, that it is for the sake and by the means of *such*, who endeavour to walk in all the *Commandments and Ordinances of God* blameless, that a Nation comes to be exalted and blessed of the Lord. Consonant hereunto is that saying of an ancient Author, *whatever good thing is bestowed upon the sons of men, it is given on the account of the righteous, for the sake of those that faithfully preach and diligently hear the Gospel, and call upon God; the unrighteous do not believe this, neither do they acknowledge it, therefore they evilly requite the people of God.*

If any shall be offended with this doctrine, we need not much wonder at it, for they who have no love for Gods people, will not acknowledge that they are beholden to them. *The poor wise man* that delivered the City by his wisdom, how quickly was he forgotten? the Text saith, *that no man remembered that poor wise man.*

Scelus pro
Scelera o.
Acts 24 5.
Vid. Reynier of
hum. learo.

Quicquid boni
toti mundo ac-
cidit, id fit
propter Eccle-
siam, &c sed
mundus hoc
non credit, neq;
cognoscit, pro-
pterea etiam
malam refert
piis gratiam.
Spargenberg.
de Servit. Jo-
seph. in Egypt.

Eccles. 9. 19.

This

This is *merces mundi*, the worlds wages, (as one loves to phrase it) to be so blind as not to see, or so ungratefull, as not to own their best friends, (I mean sincere Christians) *upon whose account and for whose sake*, the Lord is pleased to conferr many great and endearing mercies upon an undeserving, yea, upon an ill-deserving people.

The truth of this *Proposition* will be sufficiently evidenced,

1. By the Examination of those allusive metaphorical expressions, which are aptly applied to *righteousness*, or to *righteous ones*.

2. By an Induction and Enumeration of particular blessings, which the men of the world have enjoyed, *for their sake and upon their account*.

3. By the Consideration of those wasting Judgments, which have presently taken place, after their Removal.

By these steps, we shall proceed to bring in such clear proofs of the Wise mans Assertion, as may procure (at least) the assent of unprejudiced Readers, and will be deny'd by none, besides inconsiderate, or resolved sinners.

I must not be long in my passage through these particulars.

To begin with the *first*, we shall find upon enquiry Gods people to be compared ;

1.
Gods people are
compared to
Bulwarks.
αἱ πόλεις τοῦ
θεοῦ

First, To the *Bulwarks* of a City, which keeps off the Enemy, and will not suffer desolation to enter: Thus Nazianzen calls *Athanasius*, the *Bulwark of Truth*.

When Sin hath made a *breach* for the Divine vengeance

vengeance to take place, God presently seeks for these, to stand in the gap, to prevent an Inundation of misery, from rushing in, upon unarmed, naked sinners, as you may read, *Jer. 5. 17. Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it:* You see here, what great account the Lord makes of his Servants, when as he will pardon a whole Nation for one righteous mans sake. So in *Ezek. 22. 30. And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me, for the Land, that I should not destroy it, but I found none:* And because he could find none, behold, how suddenly winged destruction overtakes them, in the following verse; *Therefore have I Ez k. 22. 31. poured out mine indignation upon them, I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath, their own wayes have I recompenced upon their heads, saith the Lord God.*

2dly. The Righteous are the Chariots and Horsemen of a State; (thus *Elisha* cried after *Elijah*, when he was taken from him by the spirit and mighty power of God; *My father, my father, the Chariot of Israel and the Horsemen thereof.*) They are the very strength of a Nation where they live, and have prevailed more with their prayers and tears, then a thousand times as many could do with their weapons of War; *One of these have chased a thousand, and two have put ten thousand to flight. whosoever shall gather together against thee,*
F
shall

2.
 To the Chariots
 and Horsemen
 of Israel.

2 King. 2. 12.

Deut. 32. 30.

shall fall for thy sake, saith God to his Church, Isa. 54. 15. and in the 17. verse, No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn; this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

3.

as Stakes to
an hedge.

Ital. version.

Vid. Gataker
Gods eye upon
Israel.
Vid. etiam
Diodat.

Semen san-
ctum statio
ejus (i. e.)
multi in urbe
viri pii causa
erunt cur Deus
non passurus
sit urbem capi.
Grotius in loc.

3dly. They are as Stakes to an hedge, or Trees to a Cawsey, that keep it from falling down, and from being broken up; thus we read Isa. 6. 13. In it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten as a Teil tree, and as an Oak whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof, or, the substance of the people, as some have rendred the Text. The Prophet here alludeth to a long Cawsey or Terrass, supported on either side with great Trees, strongly rooted, which reached from the Kings Palace, to the Gate *Shallecheth*, on the West-side of the Temple; which Gate you find mentioned, 1 Chron. 26. 16.

Now the Righteous are these Trees on either side the Cawsey, which have life, and substance in them; and though sometimes the Trees may cast their leaves, yet being firmly rooted, they keep the Cawsey from decaying and mouldring away: thus the holy seed (notwithstanding all their failings) do support and bear up the Nation, which but for them might be suddenly wasted, and brought to utter desolation.

For the sake of the Godly (saith Grotius) God will not suffer the City to be taken.

Lastly,

Lastly, They are the *Pillars and Foundation of* 4.
Church and State ; Prov. 10. 25. As the whirl- As Pillars and
wind passeth away, so is the wicked no more : but the Foundations.
righteous is an everlasting foundation, or, the foun- Fundamentum
dation of the world, (as Arias Montanus hath seculi.
rendred the words :) They are the very Atlases
of the world, that support, and bear it up, and
keep it from falling upon the heads of the un-
godly. In Psal. 75. 3. David saith, that he himself
bare up the pillars of the earth : If once these Pillars
were removed, the whole Fabrick of the world
would presently tumble down, and be turned into
a Chaos of confusion. As soon as ever Jesus
Christ, by the Preaching of the everlasting Gospel,
hath gathered together the number of the Elect,
the Elements shall (then) melt with fervent heat, 2 Pet. 3. 10.
the Earth also, and the works that are therein shall
be burnt up.

It is for the sake of *Christs little flock*, of that
 sorry handfull of sincere Believers, who are so
 much scorned and despised by the unrighteous,
 and accounted the *πρεσβυτερα τῶ κόσμου*, the very
filth of the world, that the world hath still a
 being, and was not long ere this on a flame, as
 it shall be at that great and notable day of
 the Lord.

The Lord accounts of the world by his Church,
 and upholds it for his Servants sake ; *were it not* 2 Kings 3. 14.
for Jehoshaphat, I would not look towards thee nor
see thee, said Elisba to Jehoram ; so may God say to
the wicked, were it not for my people, I would have
noregard at all to you.

Thus you have shadowed forth, under several Metaphorical expressions, the real serviceableness of *righteous ones*, in order to the *exaltation of a Nation*.

I am in the next place to instance in some particular Blessings, which *Nations* have enjoyed for righteousness sake, and still may enjoy upon the account of the Righteous: And these (besides many others, which I shall not now so much as name) are *Truth, Peace, Plenty, Victory over enemies, and Preservation from ruine*.

I.

God continues
the Truths of the
Gospel for his
peoples sake.

Act. 18. 9, 10,
11.

Deut. 33. 3.

Dicuntur fide-
les se adjunxisse
pedibus Dei, ut
accipiant e ser-
monibus ejus
hoc est, in ejus
doctrina profi-
ciant, Calv. in
loc.

First, It is for the sake of his people, that the Lord gives and continues the *great truths* of his Gospel, his blessed ordinances, the means of salvation to any Nation; hence St. Paul was commanded and encouraged of God, after his *first vision*, to go into *Macedonia*, in a *second*, to continue preaching the Gospel at *Corinth*, because, the Lord tells him, he had much people in that City, so that, it was for his peoples sake, that the Lord sent the Apostle to *Corinth* to preach the Gospel; *yea, he loved the people, all his Saints are in thy hands, and they sat down at thy feet, every one shall receive of thy words*.

The Psalmist reckons the enjoyment of Gods word and ordinances, as the greatest mercy which the Jews were bless'd with, above any other people, and therefore had more abundant cause to praise God for his great goodness, *Psal. 147. 19, 20. He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his Statutes, and his judgments unto Israel, he hath not dealt so with any Nation, and as for his judgments they*

they have not known them, praise ye the Lord.

There are many ('tis to be feared) in the Christian world, that have no serious apprehension of this singular great mercy, but look upon it as an enjoyment that may well enough be spared; Preaching is counted but foolishness, and all the means of grace are thought to be unnecessary and undesirable, yet if it were but well considered, that it is not onely a great mercy in it self (which impenitent sinners will not be perswaded to believe) but also, that this is a blessing which seldom comes alone, for where God sets up the light of his Gospel, he usually sends *peace* and *plenty*, and many other mercies to accompany it, so that, where the means of grace have been most pure and powerful, other outward blessings have been there most plentiful, and abounding; If this consideration (I say) was but once well digested in the hearts of the sons of men, many that heretofore have had low thoughts of the means of grace, might see reason enough to have them in greater estimation, for the time to come. *Blessed are your eyes* (saith Christ to his Disciples) *for they see, and your ears, for they hear.* And, *blessed is the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.* Mat. 13. 16.
Psal. 89. 15.

2. The Lord gives that sweet and much to be desired mercy of *Peace*, for his peoples sake, thus *righteousness and peace have often kissed each other,* *Psa. 85. 10.* and 'tis promised, *Isa. 45. 13, 14. Great shall be the peace of thy Children.* 2.
The blessing of
peace.

When the Prophet *Isaiah* brought that startlig
news

news of the *Babylonish* captivity, to *Hezekiah*, the good King comforts himself with this, that the judgement threatned, should not fall upon the Nation in his dayes, *Isa. 39. 8.* Then said *Hezekiah* to *Isaiah*, good is the word of the Lord, which thou hast spoken: He said moreover, for there shall be peace and truth in my dayes. He firmly believed God upon his word, who had already assured him, that he would defend this City to save it, for his own sake, and for his Servant *Dauids* sake.

Isa. 37. 35.

It is reported of *Luther*, that he was known to pray often, with much earnestness, and fervour of spirit, That so long as he lived, Germany might be quiet and enjoy peace; and when he foresaw a black cloud of judgment hanging over that people, he told some of his Friends, that he would do his best, to keep it from breaking in his dayes; yea, he believed also that it should not: and he said moreover, when I am gone, let them that come after me look to it.

I'll conclude this particular, with that precious promise, *Isa. 32. 17, 18.* And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

3.
The Blessing of
Plenty.

Thirdly, The great blessing of *Plenty*, God gives for his peoples sake. Thus God blessed *Laban* for *Jacob's* sake, *Gen. 30. 30.* It was little (said *Jacob* to *Laban*) which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased into a multitude, and the Lord hath blessed thee, since my coming.

Potiphar also prospered greatly, whilst *Joseph* was

was with him, *Gen. 39. 5.* And it came to pass from that time, that he made him over-seer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptians for Josephs sake, and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. Yea the whole land of Egypt fared the better for Josephs sake, for when there was a Famine over all the face of the earth, there was bread enough, and plenty of corn in Egypt, which by Josephs wise forecast, was laid up in Store-houses against that time.

Sic propter unum aliquem Deum benedicere vitam indignis.

Fourthly, *Victory over Enemies* is another great mercy which the Lord of Hosts often giveth for his servants sake, and by their means.

4.

Victory over Enemies.

What a great conquest did the Heathen Emperor obtain, through the means of the *thundring Legion* of Christians, who by their fervent prayers prevailed with God to discomfit an huge army, with thundring and lightning.

Antonius philosophus, Euseb. Eccles. hist. l. 5. c. 5.

Legio xpo servavit. & dicitur fuit.

And *Aurelius*, by experience found, that Christians prevailed more with their *prayers*, then others could do with their *arms*, for the good of the Empire, and therefore, he desired the Senate, to cease the Persecution, lest the Christians should turn those spiritual weapons against the Empire : So then, *the Race is not to the Swift, nor the Battle to the Strong ; But thine (O Lord) is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all, (thy people, as David acknowledgeth)* 1 Chron. 29. 11, 12.

Eccles. 9. 11.

Lastly,

5.

Preservation
from ruine and
destruction.

Non solum ad
preces tuas li-
berabis inno-
centem (sed
quid magis vi-
mirum est) eti-
am nocentem
(puritate
manuum tua-
rum) (i. e.)
propter preces
tuas ex pura
manu perfe-
ctas. Piscator
in loc.

Lastly, *Preservation from ruine and destruction*, have the Righteous obtained for a disobedient and stiff-necked people; A clear proof we have of this, Job 22. 30. *He shall deliver the Island of the Innocent*, or (according to the margent) *the Innocent shall deliver the Island*; and it is delivered by the *pureness of thine hands*. He shall deliver the Island of the Innocent, in the Hebrew it is, *non innocentem*, he shall deliver the Island of the guilty (q. d.) a Righteous man that truly fears God, shall be instrumental for the delivering of those (at least from present ruine) who are yet in their sins, and have therefore no such interest with God, to prevail with him, to be thus gracious and merciful unto them.

Therefore he said, he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them, Psal. 106. 23. And Isa. 65. 8. *Thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, destroy it not, for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants sake, that I may not destroy them all.*

Temperat Deus
penas, ne e-
lectas plantas
radicibus evel-
lat. Mariorat
in loc.

For his Elects sake, the Lord in judgement, thinks thoughts of mercy, towards a very vile and sinful people, who cease not to go on in wayes of rebellion against him; and herein he deals with wicked men, that do but *cumber the ground*, as if one had resolved to pull up a barren Vineyard, and quite lay it waste, yet should nevertheless refrain in part, because of some choice fruitful Plants that are found in it.

If there had but been ten Righteous Persons in
Sodom,

Sodom, the Lord promised his servant *Abraham*, that he would not destroy it for *tens* sake. And it is worth our observation, that the Lord never left off granting, till *Abraham* left off asking mercy, for that people. This may encourage the righteous among us, to continue in prayer, and not to cease pleading with God for mercy to this sinful land of our nativity. *Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence; And give him no rest till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem (till he make England) a praise in the earth.*

Gen. 18. 32.

Isa. 62. 6, 7.
*Qui memores
 estis (i. e.) qui
 predicatis Do-
 minum. Vatabl.*

I have done with the two first *Heads* for *confirmation*.

In the next place, If we consider those *wasting judgments*, which (after the removal of the righteous) like a *swift torrent*, have broken in upon the ungodly, the truth of the Proposition, will yet be more fully manifested.

3.
*Consider the
 wasting judg-
 ments which fol-
 low after the
 removal of the
 Godly.*

No sooner was *Noah* got into the *Ark*, but God sent such a deluge of water, as swept away the wicked Inhabitants of the earth; The flood-gates of heaven are set open, and the fountain of the great depths broken up, and unavoidable destruction rusheth in, upon the sinners of the old world.

Gen. 7. 11.

In the very same day that *Lot* set foot out of *Sodom*, came such a storm of fire and brimstone upon those Cities, that in a few hours entomb'd them in their own ashes, and left them as standing monuments of the Lords wrathful indignation, upon ungodly wretches, to the end of the world.

Not long after good King *Josiah* was taken away, the Kingdom of *Judah* tumbled down apace, the

Ila. 71. 1.

people of the Land was carried into captivity, and all went to wrack with them; thus the Lord in mercy, many times takes away the righteous *from the evil to come*; he doth with them, as men are wont to do with their corn in the field, when it is catching weather, they are careful to get it into their barns, before the rain fall; so God took away *Josiah* before the dismal destruction of that people, as he had promised, 2 *King.* 22. 19, 20.

When the Righteous had left *Jerusalem*, and were gone to *Pella*, as they had been warned of God, the City is presently taken and as great wrath is poured forth upon that people, as ever was upon any Nation in the world besides, nay none like unto it, according to the prognostick of our blessed Saviour, *Mat.* 24. 21. So that they might justly take up the like complaint with their forefathers in their *Babylonish* captivity, and a more bitter lamentation (if they could find words to express it) then that we read of, *Lam.* 1. 12. *Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of his fierce anger.*

Methuselah the longest-liv'd Patriarch, dyed the year before the Flood; *St. Austin* was taken away by death immediately before *Hippo* was sacked by the *Vandals*; and the death of *St. Ambrose*, was the fore-runner of the ruine of *Italy*. I have somewhere read an observation of *Luther*, that all the Apostles died, before the destruction of *Jerusalem*, except *John*; and *Luther* himself died a little before

before the wars began in *Germany*.

☞ It bodes no good to a State, when God picks such choice, principal Plants out of it; Surely this speaks the Lords intention to take away the hedge of his Vineyard, and to lay it waste. It was a sign that *Sampson* meant, to pull down the house on the *Philistins* heads, when he attempted to stir the Pillars; and when God takes away the Pillars and Supporters of a Nation, certainly he intends it no good; 'tis greatly to be feared, that he is already come out of his place, to punish the Inhabitants of the *Earth* for their Iniquity. Isa. 26. 21.

Thus I have given in the poof of the Proposition by some argumentative confiderations, which being twisted together, will make a strong cord, sufficient to draw any that have staggered in the belief of this particular, to a firm perswasion of the great use and furtherance of *Righteousness*, for the exaltation of a Nation.

But it may now be quarry'd, where is that Righteousness to be found, that exalteth a Nation, or who is to be accounted Righteous? For there be many that are meer pretenders to Righteousness, and Oh! who but they are the people of God, because they are of this, or the other *Perswasion*, and yet they are very Hypocrites, a Generation of Dissemblers, Enemies to the State, that will live quietly nowhere. Quær.

This is the censure many give the Professors of Religion, and those who are of that temper, deservedly incur a severe censure. As for such, Answ.

*Petulantiffi-
ma est inſania,
paucorum ma-
lorum odio, in
bonos omnes
debaebavi.*

I heartily wiſh their Vizards were pluckt off, that they might appear in their own colours: But let us take heed of miſſing the *right mark*, by taking a *wrong aim*, of cenſuring thoſe for *Hypocrites*, whom the Lord knows to be *Righteous*; For by paſſing wrong judgment, we may condemn the Generation of Gods Children.

*If the Romans
did ſo highly
value the word
Quirites,
much more
ſhould we value
the word Chri-
ſtians*

When I ſpeak in the deſerved praiſe of Righteouſneſs, and in the juſt commendation of the Righteous, I am no Advocate for *Faction*, *Sides* and *Parties*, who ſeek their *own ends*, and are Enemies to the peace of the Goſpel; But I plead for ſuch as *fear God, and honour the King*. That mans Piety may be much ſuſpected, who ſpends his Zeal in crying up a *Party*: The good old name of *Chriſtian*, let us honour and preſerve; but for other names, that tend to the *dividing way*, let them be for ever buried in oblivion, let them not be ſo much as once named among Chriſtians.

*Bp. Hall pax
terris.*

It was a notable ſaying of a very Reverend Biſhop, *Damnentur ad infernum uſque barathrum, illa nominum opprobria, Lutheranorum, Calvinianorum, &c. quæ fidei ejusdem profeſſoribus vulgo objectari ſolent*. Let thoſe names of *Lutherans, Calvinists, &c.* (which are objected by way of reproach and ſcorn, to the profeſſors of the ſame faith) be ſent back to the loweſt hell from whence they came.

The great fundamental Articles of Faith, believingly meditated on, breed good bloud and ſpirits, but moſt of the controverſies that have been ſo eagerly agitated among us, do but fill the heads
of

of men with an airy kind of Religion, which prepares their hearts for infidelity and downright Atheism. This is a sad truth, well known to all considering persons: Since our late unhappy Divisions, Atheism hath so wonderfully increased and abounded in all places, that we may justly fear (as holy Mr. Greenham once did) *this Nation to be in greater danger, of being destroyed by Atheism, then by Popery*: God deliver us from both.

But to give a direct Answer to the Quæry; there are several peculiar Characters of a righteous man, which time will not now permit me to insist on; I shall therefore set him before you, with that Scripture badge and cognizance, which St. John hath put upon him, 1 Epist. 3. 7. *He that doth righteousness, is righteous*; he that doth righteousness, not in a legal sence, (there is no such man to be found upon the face of the earth) but in an Evangelical sence, and thus he that sincerely endeavours, *always to keep a conscience void of offence, toward God and toward man*; that leads a *quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty*; He that is carefull to observe all things which the Lord hath commanded in *both Tables*; this is the person to whom righteousness may be rightly ascribed. But as for those, that are intoxicated with errors, will be drunk with wine and strong drink, who prophane the Sabbath, swear, curse, and blaspheme the holy and tremendous name of God, that turn aside the needy from judgment, and take away the right from the poor, that go beyond,
OR

or defraud their brethren in any matter, or that live in the practice of any abominable transgression, they have no lot nor portion in the *former part of my Text*, (they have not the honour of being instrumental for the exaltation of a Nation) till God give them repentance; they may take their share of *the latter*, viz. of that *reproach*, which by their sins, they bring upon a *people*; of which I am now to speak. — *But sin is a reproach to any people.*

Vid. Buxtorf.
Bibl. Polyglot.
Pietas nationum vel in
Deum, vel in
homines est pec-
catum, quia
omnis illorum
pietas in Idola
est. Mercerus
in loc.

Pietatem cum
significat
[Chesed] non
vulgare sed
praeclaram, in-
signem & ex-
cellentem pie-
tatem signifi-
cat; Ita quoque
quando in ma-
lam partem ac-
cipitur non
vulgarem im-
pietatem &
scelus signifi-
cat, sed insigne
& inorme. Vid.
Paul. Fag. in
Levit. 20. 17.

There be divers readings of these words, which need not give us any trouble to reconcile them, seeing they speak the same sense with our English Bibles: Only the Hebrew word [Chesed] which is here rendred a *reproach*, hath a double signification, and the one is contrary to the other, as *Sacer* in Latine, which signifieth both *holy* and *cursed*; thus the word that is here rendred *probrum*, signifies also *pietas*; hence some have translated this latter part of my Text, *At pietas populorum est peccatum*, (q. d.) *the Religion and Piety of Nations* (that know not God) *is sin*; which is chiefly to be understood of their Idol-worship, and indeed, all their most moral performances are but *splendid peccata*, *shining abominations*, in the sight of the living and true God.

This is the first and genuine signification of the Hebrew word [Chesed] it signifies properly, *pietas*, *misericordia*, *benignitas*, but then, *per Antiphrasin* it is also translated, *impietas*, *crudelitas*, *probrum*: And when it is translated *piety*, it is not to be understood of any ordinary, common, and low

low degree of holiness, but of extraordinary, excellent, raised grace ; so when it is taken for the contrary, (as here it is in the judgment of the most and best Expositors I have met with) it imports not a little crime, or some small offence, but that which is most notorious and highly provoking, as *Paulus Fagius* hath observed, from *Levit. 20. 17.*

And *Mercer* reads the word in that place, *abominatio*, or *res nefanda*, an horrid wickedness, a thing not to be mentioned, much less to be practised : Thus we are to understand it in the *Text*, viz. that sin (especially that capital crying sin of Injustice, which is here chiefly pointed at) is a very great and heinous reproach, and an high provocation to the pure eyes of the holy God ; *The Lord trieth the righteous, but the wicked and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth* : And better it is to have all the world to hate us, then God to hate us. Psal. 11. 5.

So now then, the beauty and benefit of Righteousness, will yet appear more amiable and desirable, by discovering to you the deformity and danger of sin ; for as Logicians observe, *Contraries do mutually illustrate each other* ; so 'tis here. Contraria juxta se posita magis illucescant.

Righteousness exalteth, lifts up a Nation on high, and makes it happy ; but *sin*, like a talent of lead Zech. 5. 8. in the Ephah, sinks it down and makes it miserable ; *They were brought low for their iniquity*, *Psal. 106. 43.* *Righteousness* is the defence of a Nation ; *Sin* leaves a people naked, and exposeth them to scorn and ruine : *Righteousness* is as a Psal. 147. 6.
strong

Psal. 62. 3.

Job 1. 9.

strong wall, or well staked hedge about a people ; *Sin is as a bowing wall or tottering fence : Righteousness and Holiness are the Pillars of a Nation, that support and bear it up, and keep it from falling : Sin is like that great wind from the Wilderness, that smites the four corners of the house, and makes it to tumble upon the heads of those that are within it ; The house of the wicked shall be overthrown, but the tabernacle of the righteous shall flourish, Prov. 14. 11.*

Again, for the sake of righteous ones, the Lord bestows (as you have already heard) those great blessings of *Truth, Peace, Plenty, Victory over enemies, and preservation from ruine and destruction,* upon a Nation ; these and many more are the sweet fruits of righteousness. But now all manner of destructive evils, as famine of Bread, and famine of the Word, Wars, cruel bondage, Pestilence, Fire, dishonour and reproach, are the cursed products of sin, the bitter effects of those works of the flesh, which the Apostle speaks of, *Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.* Thus is sin *a reproach to any people.*

*Acceptit varias
clades, incidit
in gravissimas
calamitates.*

Druf.

*Exitio addi-
tus, Grotius.*

Sin is that, which makes Kingdoms desolate, and bereaves them of all their power, greatness, and renown ; *When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel ; but when he offended in Baal, he died, Hos. 13. 1.*

Jer. 25. 9.

It is sin that hath divested and disrobed many flourishing Nations of their excellency and glory, that hath made them become a curse, and an astonishment, an hissing and perpetual desolation ; sin hath unjoynted and broken asunder the confederacies,

racies, and societies of all creatures ; It is the great *make-bate* in the world, the cause of all that *Ataxie* and *Disorder*, of that *Stubborness* and *Rebellion*, of those *Errors* and *Divisions*, of those *Fightings*, *Brawlings* and *Vexatious Law-sutes*, which are to be found in *Church* and *State* : all these *Evils*, and abundance more (which I cannot now stand to mention) are the mischievous consequences of *sin*.

1 Cor. 3. 3.
James 4. 1.

I have done with the *Illustration* of the *Text*, let us now see what *Use* is to be made of it; and having endeavoured to give a *light* to the *Text* by *Explication*, I shall now proceed to the *life* of a *Sermon*, which is the *Application*.

Applic

First then, Hence we may be Informed, who are the *best*, and who are the *worst* Members of a *State*, who are the most profitable, and who are the most injurious, to the *Nation* in which they live. Unrighteous ones cry out against the Righteous, when as they themselves do the most mischief, as the good Prophet justly retorted the crimination upon *Ahab* himself, 1 *Kings* 18. 17, 18. *One Sinner* (saith *Solomon*) *destroyeth much good*; how much more then a rabble of *Rebellious Sinners*, who are continually provoking the great *God* to anger, with their crying sins, and with their cursed abominations?

Use 1.
For Informati-
on.

Ecclef. 9. ult.

They, and they only that fear *God*, will honour the *King*, in a *Scripture* sence. The *Righteous* man is the best *Instrument*, for the exalting of a *Nation*, however he is spoken against by the ungodly, for (as one saith truly of him) *Christianus inimicus nemini, multo minus Imperatori*: A true

H

Chri-

Christian is an enemy to no man, much less to the King: He obeys for Conscience sake, and from a principle of the fear of God (who requires a subjection to the higher powers) he is subject and obedient; *He submits to every ordinance of man for the Lords sake, whether it be to the King as supreme, or unto Governours, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; for so is the will of God, that with well doing he may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.*

*Hic videmus
eos qui Sauli
honorem exhi-
tere nolu-
runt, & tribu-
tum vel munus
recusarunt, à
Spiritu Sancto
notari; ac fi-
lios Belial (i.e.)
nequam & im-
probos ac ne-
bulones vocari.
Calv. in loc.*

They whose hearts the Lord had touched, joyned themselves with Saul, (when he was anointed King) but the children of Belial despised him,
1 Sam. 10. 26, 27.

*It is no wonder (said our late great and graci-
ous King) if men not fearing God, should not honour
their King, they will easily contemn such shadows of
God, who reverence not that supreme and adorable
Majesty, in comparison of whom, all the glory of men
and Angels is but obscurity.*

An unrighteous man can never be a good Sub-
ject, and profitable member for promoting the
Weal publique: For,

1. 1. If he be prophane, he will do the King more
disservice by his lawless practices, then ever he can
do him service, from those loyal principles, which
he is a great pretender to: Or,
2. 2ly. If he be Factious, he will strike at Magi-
stracy under the cloak of Piety, and that Rebellion
may not appear bare-fac'd, he will mask it with
Religion: Or,

3ly. If

3ly. If he be covetous, and in some publique
 employment, and Office of Trust, he will be sure
 to drive on his own Interest, without any regard
 to the honour of the King, or profit of the King-
 dom ; Covetousness (*which is the root of all evil*) 1 Tim. 6. 10.
 makes the Courts of Judicature, *magna latrocinia*,
places of great Robbery, as St. Austin speaks.

The next Use is for Exhortation ; and here let
 us all be exhorted and perswaded, (and O ! that
 God himself would effectually perswade us, by the
 power of his blessed Spirit) to love righteousness,
 and to hate all manner of unrighteousness, *to have*
no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darkness, Eph. 5. 11.
but rather to reprove them : To follow that which
is good, and not that which is evil. He that doth 3 Ep. John 11.
good, is of God : but he that doth evil, hath not
seen God.

This is a duty that nearly concerns all men,
 both high and low, rich and poor : There's none
 so poor, but he may contribute something toward
 the welfare and happiness of the Kingdom ; he is
 to lift and lift again, by *his prayers and tears*, for
 the *Exaltation* of it ; and these are powerfull
 means, which will wonderfully prevail with God,
 for the *obtaining of mercy, and finding grace to help*, Heb. 4. ult. †
in time of need.

This poor sinfull Nation (through the good-
 ness of God, for his Servants sake) hath for many
 years past, been miraculously preserved, as the
Bush in the midst of burnings : After many wasting
 Judgments inflicted on us, by Sword, Pestilence,
 and Burnings, the Lord hath not (blessed be his

great name) broken us from being a people, for he yet waits to be gracious to us : But when we consider the result of former deliverances, is to commit greater abominations still, may we not justly fear, that God hath a farther controversie with this Land, even such an one, as shall make it to mourn once more, and lay us lower, then ever we have been cast down under former pressures?

Psal. 4. 5.

We may be secure, but we can never be safe, while we go on in our sins, neglecting *to offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and to put our trust in the Lord.*

Ezek. 20. 37.

Psal. 21. 8.

What though Judgments have left us in a great measure, if we have not left our sins, these will cause us to pass under the rod again, and will certainly make us more miserable : *For the hand of the Lord shall find out all his enemies, his right hand shall find out those that hate him.*

Jer. 18. 20.

Come forth then, ye righteous ones, and with one shoulder, endeavour the supportation of a tottering Nation : Oh ! labour to heal the breaches thereof, for it shaketh ; *Stand before the Lord, to speak good for us, and to turn away his wrath from us, as the good Prophet did for a very wicked and ungratefull people, Jer. 18. 20.*

Sin hath made many a wide gap, for Divine vengeance to enter in, and to lay us waste ; Oh ! bring righteousness along with you, to make up the hedge, to repair our ruines.

And

And first of all, I humbly crave leave, to direct this Exhortation to you (*my Lords*) who are to sit in Judgment. You very well know, that the place of Justice is an hallowed place, and therefore is to be preserved from Scandal and Corruption, no unrighteousness should come there, if it do, it will make strange work, and horrible confusion, like Elements, when they are out of their proper places.

*The Exhortation
branched.
1. To Judges.*

Injustice in Judges, idleness in Ministers, unfaithfulness in Stewards, and impiety in Professors, are exceeding loathsome and abominable transgressions; I pray God the guilt of none of these sins may cleave to our souls.

Peccatum majus, ubi specialis repugnantia inter peccatum & peccatum.

I beseech you (*my Lords*) put forth your helping hands, for the rousing away of our reproach. You are called the *Shields* of the Earth, be pleased to use your best care and diligence, to safeguard and defend us from those that rise up against us, that the wicked may not prevail, nor the enemies of God any longer blaspheme his name.

Psal. 74. 10.

You are called *Fathers*, this minds you of encouraging and praising those that do well, and of the just severity you are to shew (yet in love, that mercy may be in the heart, when justice is in the hand) against the stubborn and disobedient. You are also termed *Gods* and *Saviours*, the Lord hath honored you with his own Name and Titles, and hath put some beams of his Authority upon you, let this high dignity, oblige you to the frequent exercise of Righteousness and Judgement, in imitating of your great Exemplar, *For the Righteous Lord.*

Psal. 82. 1.

Pfal. 11. 75

Lord loveth Righteousness: his countenance doth behold the upright.

Vid Polani
Syntag. 2239.
2240.

*Preposteræ
sunt leges, quæ
neglectæ Dei
jure tantum
hominibus con-
sulant.* Calv.
Instit. l. 4. c. 20.

Prov. 16. 31.

Pfal. 2. 10, 11.

You are in a double capacity of doing us good, viz. as *Christians*. and as *Magistrates*; and you have a twofold *Rule* to walk by, *the Law of God*, and *the established Laws of the Land*; you are to consult both, and first of all, let the Law of God be your Counsellor, your chifest care should be for Religion; for those Laws are preposterous, which neglecting the right of God, do provide only for men (as learned *Calvin* hath well observed.) What an honour and glory will it be (*my Lords*) to those venerable hory hoary heads of yours, *if they be found in a way of Righteousness*? God grant they may. Be instructed therefore ye Judges of the Earth: *to serve the Lord with fear, in the concernments of his Church*, and your King and Country with faithfulness in *State affairs*.

2. *To the Justices of the Peace.*

Secondly, I would commend Righteousness to you, our honourable and worshipful Justices, as a very choice Friend and Companion, which will be hugely advantagious unto you, and in you, to us, and will get you more honor in the Country, then moroseness, passion, or partiality can do; Be pleased therefore to think Righteousness worthy of your acquaintance, as that wick will exalt you, and the Nation also, but *Sin* will be a *reproach* unto both.

3. *To Lawyers.*

Thirdly, If Lawyers would be perswaded, to observe this Rule of Righteousness, and to do to others, as they themselves would be done by, they should find more comfort in being *just and honest*, then

then in being *politick and subtile* ; and the *Fees* they receive in the defence of *Truth*, will do them more good, then ten times as much, in making a bad Cause seem good, and a good Cause seem bad : It was a wicked saying of a profane spirited man, *He that will not venture his body, shall never be a stout man, and he that will not venture his soul, shall never be rich.* Surely the wretched sinner would find this a desperate venture, when he came to thrust his head into the other world : *For Riches profit not in the day of wrath, but Righteousness delivereth from death.*

*Newissan a
Lawyer.*

Prov. II. 4.

Fourthly, As for you that are to be of the Grand Inquest, or of any other Jury, or shall be brought in as Witnesses in any Cause; Remember (I pray you) that you are to Swear *in Truth, in Judgment and in Righteousness*, and so to proceed according to your Oath. (1.) You Swear *in Truth*, and therefore whatsoever is affirmed or denied by you, must truly, and for a certainty be affirmed or denied : You are to Swear (such is the form of the Oath) *the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth.* (2.) You Swear *in Judgment* (i. e.) well weighing, and advisedly considering, what it is you are to Swear, and who it is by whom you are to Swear; not taking an Oath hand over head, vainly and rashly, but so as you may have comfort in performing that great Duty aright, in making known the Truth, and putting an end to some great doubt and controversie. (3.) You are to Swear *in Righteousness*, (q. d.) there must be a just cause of your Swearing, and that which is agree-

*4. To the Grand
Inquest.*

Jer. 4. 2.

*Veritas hand
dubie hic ac-
cipitur pro inte-
gritate cordis.
Cal. in loc.*

greeable to the will of God: And be sure you conceal nothing, which your Oath obligeth you to make known, lest you bring upon you the flying roll of curses threatned *Zech. 5. 4.*

I have read a notable passage of a meer moral man, which is very well worth your imitation; *This person being desired by a Friend to testifie a Lye, which he was to avouch by an Oath, he returned this serious answer; I am your Friend (saith he) to the Altar, i. e. as far as Conscience, Religion, and honesty will permit, but no farther.*

μαρτυρεῖν
τὸ ψεῦδος.

5. To Ministers

Fifthly, In the last place, let us be exhorted (Fathers and Brethren) who are Ministers of the Gospel, and Preachers of Righteousness, to practice righteousness, as well as preach it, to be Ensamples to our Flocks, and not only to shew them the way, but also to walk before them in it; *that when the chief Shepherd shall appear, we may receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

1 Pet. 5. 4.

1. Mot.
Righteousness
is most congru-
ous to our Pro-
fession.

Christianus in
peccato vivens,
& concupiscen-
tiis suis infer-
viens, horren-
dum spectrum,
imo monstrum
censetur coram
Deo. vid. Da-
ven. in Col.
p. 205.

Thus we have all of us our duty laid down before us, let us now be perswaded to take it up, and to put it into speedy practice: And for this end, we may consider these following *Motives.*

1. Righteousness is most congruous and suitable to our Profession: What a Christian? and an unrighteous man? A Christian? and a proud man? A Christian? and a Drunkard? A Christian? and a common Swearer? A Christian? and an Atheist? What a reproachfull thing is this? If sin be a reproach to any people, much more to a Christian people.

It

It is better to be a just Heathen, then an unrighteous Christian; a sober Heathen, then a drunken Christian; a chaste Heathen, then an unclean Christian. 'Twould be better posterity should never know such persons lived in the world, then to know us by such reproachful names. *Virtutis stragulam pudefacis, Thou puttest honesty to open shame*, said Diogenes to Antipater, who being exceeding vicious, wore a white cloak, the emblem of innocency.

It was a great reproach to the Jew, when an Heathen told him, that he would not believe him, though he swore, *As God shall help me*: And St. Paul tells those of the Circumcision, that the name of God was blasphemed among the Gentiles, by that unagreeableness that was betwixt their practice, and their Law. So now it may be said of us, that the name of Christ is blasphemed among the Turks and Heathens, by the vile and scandalous lives of us, who call our selves Christians, and particularly in this sin of injustice; for shame, let us at last endeavour, to wipe off this reproach from our Profession, by leaving these practices, that do so much offend God, and all good men.

Non credam jures Verpe per Auchialum.
Martial.

Rom. 2. 24.

Quomodo bonus est magister cujus tam malos videmus esse discipulos?
Salv. l. 4. p. 149
Vid. Whole Duty of Man, p. 237.

2. The welfare and happiness of the Nation, very much depends upon our being righteous: So long as the people of Israel had just Judges, and righteous Kings to rule over them, *all things went well with them*, as it is said of Judah, 2 Chron. 11. 12. But when they forsook their God, and cast his Laws behind their backs, they became a
I scorn,

2. Mos.
The welfare of a Nation depends on righteousness.

*Florentissima
Lacedaemonio-
rum respub.
qua legum se-
veritate creve-
rat, mox ad
ruinam incli-
mare cepit, ubi
atrocissimas
subditorum in-
jurias Ephori
surdis auribus
neglexerunt.
Plutarch.*

*Vera justitia
non est, nisi in
ea repub. cujus
conditor, re-
storq; Christus
est. Aug. de
Civit. Dei.*

scorn, and a derision, to all that were round about them, and though they were Gods own heritage, yet did he give them to reproach, and the Hea-then ruled over them.

The *Lacedaemonians* flourished mightily, till their *Ephori* were deaf to the cries of the oppressed, and suffered Justice to fall in the Streets, neglecting to punish notorious crimes; and then that State in a short time dwindled to nothing.

So I might instance in *Rome*, and other famous Empires and Kingdoms in the world, whilst they followed but the shadow of justice (for theirs was no better, having no true knowledge of God) they prospered, and became formidable; but as the people decayed in morality and good manners, so the Kingdoms decayed in their might and greatness.

*3. Mot.
Our particular
happiness de-
pends on righ-
teousness.*

*Scalam erigito,
et solus ascen-
dito.*

*4. Mot.
All things are
known to God.
Heb. 4. 13.
γυναικα και
τα τεραχη της
μυρια.
Psal. 139. 12.
Prov. 15. 3.
Jer. 16. 17.*

3. Our own particular happiness lyes this way, viz. in the way of righteousness; *Prov. 12. 28. In the way of righteousness is life, and in the path way thereof, there is no death*: If any think of going to heaven some other way, and not in the way of righteousness, I shall say to that man, as *Constantine* said to *Acesius* the Novatian Heretick, *Erect thee a Ladder, and go up alone by thy self.*

4. All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do: Let us consider this also; we may hide our actions from men, but we can never hide them from the all-seeing eye of God; *For the darkness and the light are both alike to him; His eyes are in every place, beholding the evil, and the good.*

If

If judgment at any time should be prevented a
false Oath taken, and wrong evidence brought in, Prov. 11. 11.
the holy God seeth and takes notice of it, and
for all these things will he bring sinners into Judge- Eccles. 11. 9.
ment.

5. Lastly, We must die and come to judgement, 5. Mot.
The time is coming when we must all appear before We must dye,
and come to
judgment.
the Judgment seat of Christ, that every one may re-
ceive the things done in his body, according to that he
hath done, whether it be good or bad, 1 Cor. 5. 10. Veniet, veniet
dies, quando
male judicata
rejudicabit
Deus.
11. Then shall ye return and discern between the
righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth
God and him that serveth him not. Mal. 3. 18.

Now for a close of all ; As we would preserve The Conclusion.
the reputation, and honour of our Christian Religi-
gion ; As we desire the exaltation and happiness
of this Nation, and would have it a quiet Habitati-
on ; As we love our own souls, and hope for eter-
nal Salvation ; As we fear to sin against an holy
and just God, who is acquainted with all our ways ;
As we desire comfort in a dying hour, at the day of
judgement, and to all eternity : Let us be perswaded
to walk by the Rule of Righteousness, to deal just-
ly, and honestly with all persons ; to let our light Mat. 5. 16.
so shine before men, that they may see our good works,
and glorifie our Father which is in Heaven.

Then shall glory dwell in our land, mercy and truth Psal. 85. 9, 10.
shall meet together, righteousness and peace shall kiss
each other.

And this shall be our rejoicing, the testimony of our
conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not 2 Cor. 1. 12.
with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have
had our conversation in the world.

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